

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2014 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Breakthrough

Application ID: 14AC156668

Program Name: Expanding Community Impact

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments:

Strengths:

The applicant's numerous data demonstrate a strong need related to the challenges of obtaining college degrees for low-income, first generation students. Data include family challenges such as low income and parents' lack of education, students' high school deficiencies such as excessive absenteeism and lack of AP coursework, and college challenges such as financial aid forms and admissions requirements. These are given in the context of district-wide, state and national comparisons.

The applicants provides well-documented substantiation on the prevalence and severity of the need by comparing the Census data on median household income, school attendance rates, high school graduation rates, and tertiary educational attainment.

The applicant's explanation of the need for afterschool and summer day camp programs in the service area is well described. Supporting documentation is provided from a variety of reputable sources. Solid comparison of local statistics to the studies referenced is persuasive.

The applicant provides a detailed and logically consistent Logic Model noting the progression of Inputs and Activities to Outcomes. All outcomes are clearly defined, measurable and appropriate to the intervention.

The applicant provides logical connections between all elements of the Logic Model. The inputs specifically and logically flow into the activities and outputs. For example, the weekly financial aid workshops logically precede senior level students' understanding of and ability to navigate the financial aspects of college; an outcome of which is the completion of scholarship applications.

The applicant demonstrates a program that is suitable to address the goals of the program. The broad spectrum of activities and outputs results in the identification and implementation of individualized interventions for program participants which strengthens the success of program's short-, medium- and long-term outcomes.

Significant internal data are provided to demonstrate success with the identified problems. 2013 examples include 100% graduation rate for high school seniors, 84% passed all their classes, and almost 50% of the six cohorts attending college will graduate within 6 years.

The applicant reports meeting or exceeding all performance measure targets throughout the 2011 -2014 grant term. Using a performance measurement system, the applicant reports having internal evidence to support its program. Academic gains in mathematics, reading fluency and comprehension, and writing are based on norm-referenced pre and post assessments.

The applicant provides evidence of consistent, successful program implementation. Documentation of effective implementation and consistent progress are evidence that the program meets and exceeds its stated outcomes.

Weaknesses:

There were no significant weaknesses found.